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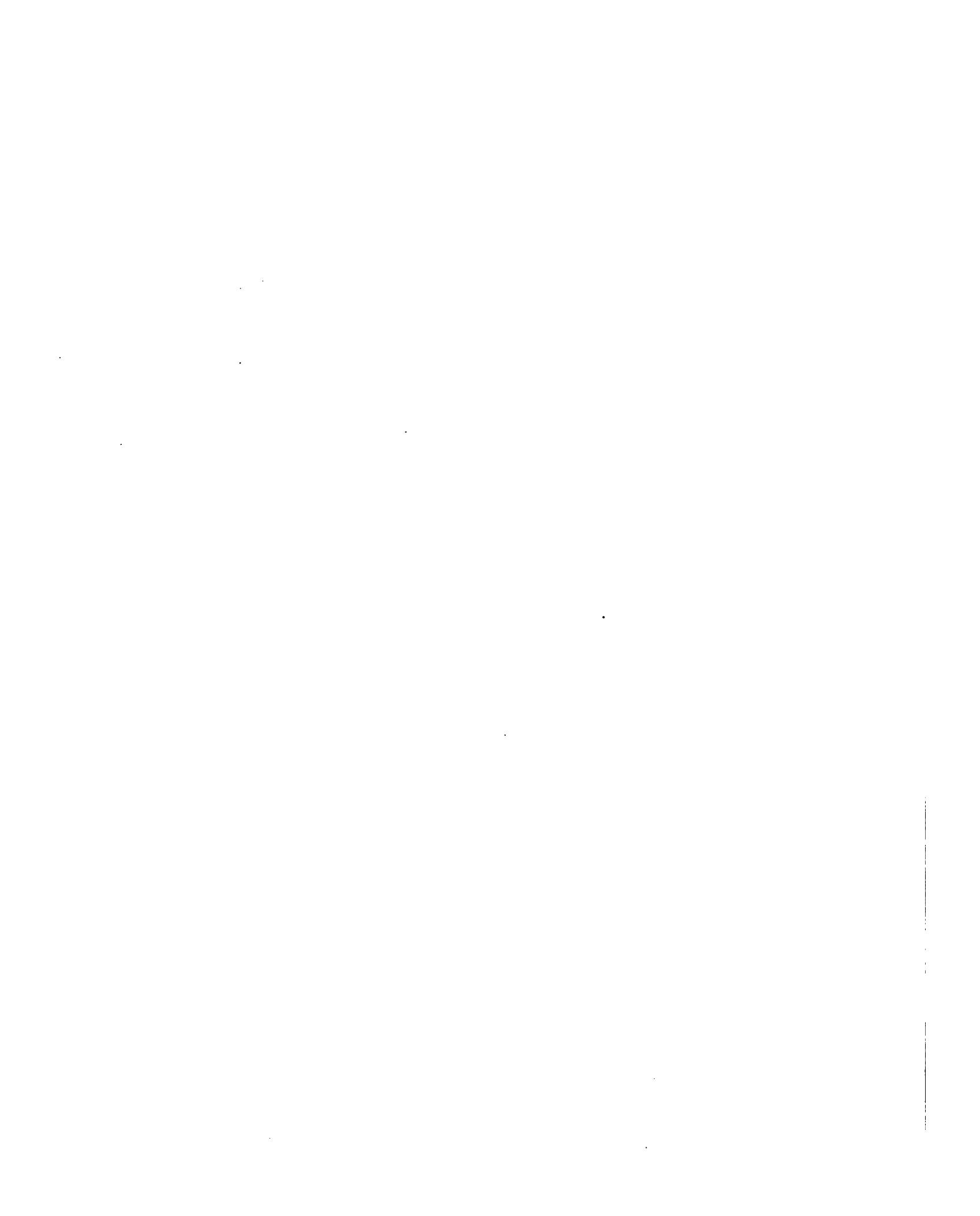
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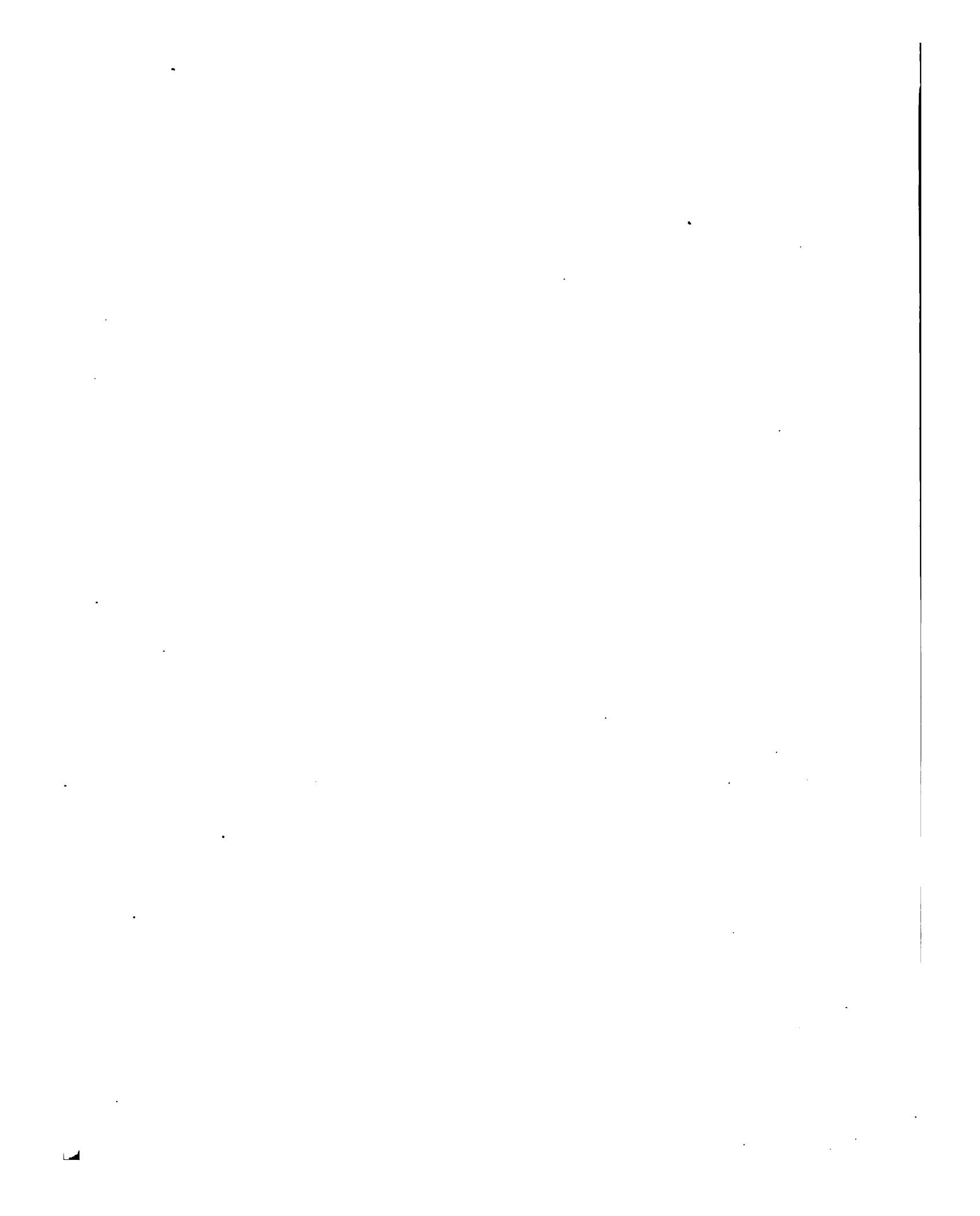
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N C L
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E D W A R D;

O R,

T H E C U R A T E;

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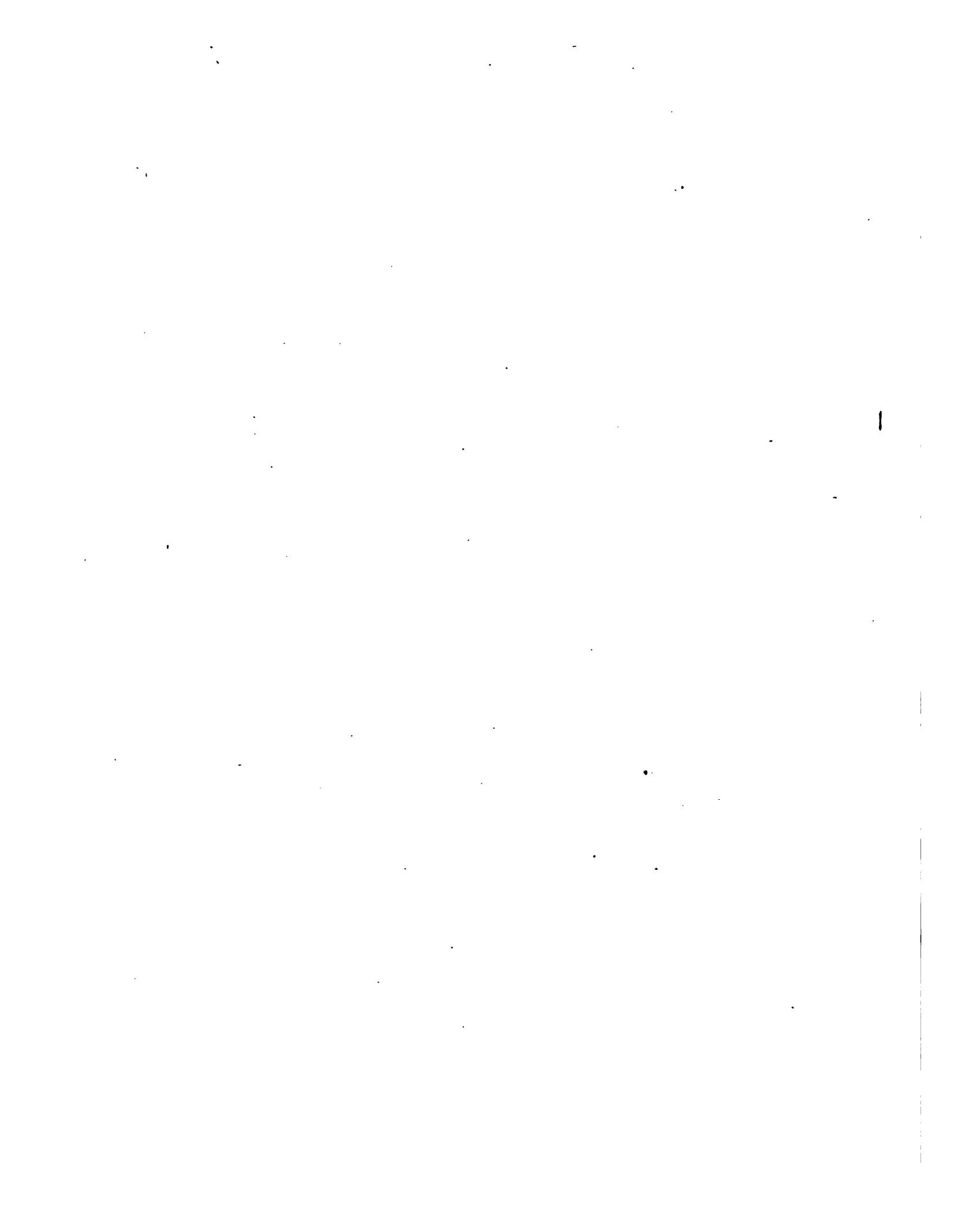
BY THE REV. S A M U E L H O O L E, A. M.

— neque enim fortuna querenda
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres. OVID.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXXVII.



E D W A R D;

O R,

T H E C U R A T E.

C A N T O I.

I.

ALL is vexation! said the sapient king,
Vexation all, and vanity and wo!
And yet, does man, that busy, restless thing,
Receive the lesson, and his toils forego?
Ah! deaf to all the sage and prophet taught,
Still in this darksome maze he gropes along,
Still seeks the wealth or power his fathers sought,
And opes his greedy ear to Pleasure's dangerous song.

B

II. Behold



II.

Behold the stripling bounding up the hill,
Each scene attractive, every object new :
Impatient hopes his swelling bosom fill,
As the wide prospect opens to his view.
Soon on some flowery bank his eye he bends,
Or stately temple glittering from on high,
While, as he faints, desire new vigour lends,
And to the chosen spot the wanderer seems to fly.

III.

But when the chosen spot at length he gains,
Its flowers are faded, and its beauty gone ;
A brighter object now his eye detains,
Which still, through fresh obstructions, draws him on.
Thus, hapless wretch ! as wavering fancy calls,
He seeks a charm that flies as he pursues ;
Till spiritless, exhausted, down he falls,
And soon his closing eyes the varied landscape lose.

IV. O !

IV.

O ! when shall Wisdom's voice be heard indeed ?
When shall weak man his solid interest own ?
When, at the cry of want, shall Avarice bleed ?
And red Ambition cast his honours down ?
When shall the shriek of pain, the moan of wo,
Be changed to notes of joy and heavenly lay ?—
—When yonder orbs of light shall cease to glow,
This mighty globe dissolve, and all things pass away.

V.

Till then, O Pilgrim sad ! thy course pursue ;
Let Patience arm thee, and Religion lead ;
Though rough the path, and dreary be the view,
Behold at length the never-failing meed !
Nor think that thou alone exposed to pain,
Art doomed to tread a solitary road ;
See multitudes superior ills sustain,
With keener anguish groan, and bend with heavier load !

VI.

And thou, whose verse a brother's woes would tell,
 With gratitude survey thy better state ;
 From thy faint heart those restless thoughts expel,
 Which oft have led thee to deplore thy fate :
 Thy nerves of fight, in early youth decayed,
 Beyond the power of medicine to restore,
 Lent to thy willing search a feeble aid,
 Just shewed fair Learning's book, and bade thee read no more.

VII.

What though to narrow, narrow bounds confined,
 Thy knowledge scarce the school-boys lore outweighs,
 While, hating ignorance, thy captive mind
 Swells with the thirst of fame, the love of praise ;
 What though the lone, dull moments slowly move,
 When lost in helpless indolence you sit,
 Yet can you join the chosen friend you love,
 The sage discourse partake, or gay, colloquial wit.

VIII. What

VIII.

What though, too oft, for thee some friendly eye
Must trace the page thou rarely canst peruse ;
What though some friendly hand must oft supply
The pen, obedient to th' inspiring muse ;
Yet canst thou view the "human face divine,"
The blushing flower, the sunny landscape bright ;
Of Nature's copious volume all is thine,
Earth and her boundless store, and heaven's creative light.

IX.

Then mourn no more—be cheerful and be wise—
ALL-SEEING PROVIDENCE directs the whole ;
Kind when he gives, and kind when he denies,
Friend, Father, Lord of every living soul !
By his decree the Asian despot reigns
O'er millions waiting the decisive nod ;
Nor less the prostrate slave his hand sustains—
No single sparrow falls without the GUARDIAN GOD.

X. Once

X.

ONCE on a fertile, but sequestered spot,
 Where SNOWDEN's top divides the labouring cloud,
 A veteran raised his solitary cot,
 A welcome refuge from th' obtruding crowd.
 Pious he was, though bred to martial rage,
 A scholar too, though war had been his trade ;
 For well he scanned great HOMER's genuine page,
 And, *Render good for ill*, his rule of life he made.

XI.

Vigorous and rugged was his outward form,
 And Indian suns had dyed his visage red,
 Yet was his heart with human kindness warm,
 At sight of want or wo his bosom bled.
 Soft was his language and his manners bland,
 No slight offences waked his slumbering ire ;
 But when Oppression raised its griping hand,
 Pale grew his quivering lip, his eye emitted fire.

XII. When

XII.

When Britain called to honourable war,
His youthful arm her conquering ensign bore ;
Oft had he led his hardy troop afar,
O'er many a desert drear, and sun-burnt shore.
And now, his labours past, he loved to tell
How hosts meet hosts, and foes with foes engage ;
For all the deathful scene he knew full well :
His tale was sometimes long, the venial fault of age.

XIII.

A few paternal acres called him lord,
These, with the scanty sum his country pays
Her worn-out veterans, fed the frugal board,
And kept from penury his latter days.
His ruddy boughs a sparkling beverage yield ;
With foreign juice no laughing goblets shine,
Save on the day that won CULLODEN's field,
He mixed the yellow bowl, and quaffed the purple wine.

XIV. Two

XIV.

Two children grew beneath his forming care,
The only relicks of his marriage bed ;
The son intelligent, the daughter fair,
And both to every social duty bred.
Oft would the father view, in EDWARD's face,
The bloom that once had decked his early prime ;
In EMMA's form, her mother's softer grace
Awaked the tender tear, and called back long-lost time.

XV.

Scarce eighteen suns had rolled o'er EDWARD's head,
Yet sage instruction had matured his mind ;
When thus the venerable father said :
“ Now let my son his sphere of action find :
“ From me but little can my EDWARD gain,
“ I never sought the toys of power or pride :
“ The world before thee lies—a spacious plain—
“ But let a father's voice thy youthful judgment guide.

XVI.

“ Ne'er let the dangerous trade of war be sought,
“ Severe the toil, though scanty is the meed ;
“ And now I deem it hard (though once I fought)
“ That private men for public wrongs should bleed.
“ Nor let thy hand acquire dishonest gain,
“ By sordid traffick and low-cringing art ;
“ Nor join the sons of strife at THEMIS' fane,
“ To wrest the doubtful law, and screen the guilty heart.

XVII.

“ But rather, as thy gentle soul inclines,
“ Let all thy studies in religion end ;
“ Serve at her altars, decorate her shrines,
“ Her faithful minister and zealous friend.
“ Slender indeed the means of life she gives
“ To modest youth unpatronized by power ;
“ Yet safe in humble peace the curate lives,
“ No wild ambition fires, no schemes of avarice sour.

C

XVIII. “ Perhaps

XVIII.

" Perhaps thy merits and thy honest fame
 " (For ever virtuous will my EDWARD prove)
 " May win some noble and accomplished dame,
 " Or shew thee worthy of a patron's love :
 " Yes, ere these eyes in long oblivion close,
 " They yet may see their darling and their pride
 " In happy competence and sweet repose,
 " The pastor of a flock, their father and their guide.

XIX.

" Then go, my son, to those bright spires repair,
 " Where Science registers her favourite names ;
 " My little substance shalt thou freely share,
 " To gain the lore thy sacred function claims.
 " A friend I have, companion of my youth,
 " Who now o'er cloistered striplings bears the sway ;
 " 'Tis he shall lead thee to the paths of truth ;
 " Go, and be just, my son, and Heaven shall smooth thy way."

XX. The

XX.

The hour arrives—he grasps his father's hand,
Who scarce restrains the fond, paternal tear.
“ Be just, my child, be this my sole command,
“ Thy neighbour love, thy bounteous God revere.”
He clasps his sister in a fond embrace—
“ O let my father all thy thoughts engage !
“ Supply with dutious love a brother's place—
“ Ye guardian powers protect, and bless his guiltless age !”

XXI.

Behold the youth in academick bowers,
His tutor's favourite and adopted son ;
In deep research he passed his lonely hours,
And many a literary prize he won.
Oft would an idle tribe, the bane and pest
Of college life, assail his peaceful door,
Raise the licentious laugh, and impious jest,
The frequent bowl demand, and drain his frugal store.

XXII.

At first young EDWARD met this rude annoy
With brow indignant and impatient eye ;
But when he found their Bacchanalian joy
All fear could master, and all shame defy,
Patient he sat amidst th' intemperate din,
Till at the last th' obstreperous train agree
(Hopeless th' intended profelyte to win)
Some student new to seek—a luckless student he !

XXIII.

Now, by degrees, the scientifick page
His mind expanded, and enlarged his views ;
Yet Poesy would oft his thoughts engage,
For from his earliest days he loved the muse.
And sometimes would he doff his college-trim,
And launch his little bark from Isis' shore,
Swift as a dart the bubbling surface skim,
Attend the swelling sail, or ply the dropping oar.

XXIV. Thus

XXIV.

Thus passed his happy years—in harmless play
And vigorous study—sport with labour joined.
Oft would the tutor's eye his charge survey,
And still new marks of worth or genius find.
And much he loved him for the father's sake,
Who once his youthful joys and toils partook,
Together had they shared their Christmas cake,
Their weekly stipend spent, and conned the self-same book.

XXV.

At length, in robes pontifical arrayed,
Within their hallowed pale the Prelates stand ;
On EDWARD's young, but pious head is laid,
With grace endued, the consecrating hand.
Lo ! to his care the sacred tome configned,
From holy lips the solemn charge is given,
While, in devotion rapt, his kindling mind
Springs from this lower earth, and wings its way to Heaven !

XXVI. Soon

XXVI.

Soon the grave President's o'er-ruling voice
Presents our graduate for the vacant seat;
Th' elective band approve their senior's choice,
And, in due form, their new companion greet.
And now the college jokes, and college wine,
Both old alike, the modest youth partakes,
He hears what livings wait the young divine,
And every morn some dream of rich preferment breaks.

XXVII.

The pittance that his willing sire bestowed,
Could just from annual debt the student clear,
Now, for his due, the bursar's statement showed
A sum immense! full sixty pounds a year.
He deems his future life exempt from care,
He longs the swelling transport to impart,
With EMMA all his growing hopes to share,
And with a son's success to glad the father's heart.

XXVIII. Swift

XXVIII.

Swift o'er the plains he spurs his foaming horse ;
Now distant far old SNOWDEN's top he spies ;
No CAMBRIAN mountain bars his rapid course,
Nor food detains, nor slumber seals his eyes ;
Till in the tranquil vale that gave him birth,
He views the dear, the hospitable cot ;
He bounds impatient on the well-known earth,
And wets with tears of joy the consecrated spot.

XXIX.

But ah ! extended on the bed of death,
Behold the venerable soldier lie !
Benumbing palsy checked his labouring breath,
Shrunk his stiff arm, and fixed his hollow eye.
“ My son, my son ! ”—no more his lips could say—
His cold, cold tongue eternal silence tied,
He strove to point where fainting EMMA lay,
Then pressed his EDWARD's hand, serenely smiled, and died.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

CANTO

C A N T O II.

I.

FULL many a day in bitterness of soul,
Such as ne'er bows to earth the wealth-swoln heir,
To thick, black woods the pious EDWARD stole,
And breathed his anguish in the darkened air ;
Yet oft in EMMA's sight a smile he wore,
And bade his voice assume a chearful tone,
The kind deceit revealed his pangs the more,
She marked his starting tear and heard his stifled groan.

II. The

II.

The youthful rector of the neighbouring vill,
Whose shapeless spire arose their cottage near,
Was oft their solitary guest, and still
When EMMA wept, he dropped a kindred tear.
Full twenty moons had now increased and wained,
Since here he came the word of truth to preach :
His blameless life the soldier's praise had gained ;
“ Who lives so well,” said he, “ is ever fit to teach.”

III.

Gentle he was, but no proud patron's slave,
Though at his birth some favouring planet smiled,
For this fair benefice his prelate gave,
Ere yet, at churches three, six years he toiled.
Now in soft ease his moments passed away,
His cultured glebe the daily board supplied,
Fruit bowed his trees, and every quarter-day
His willing parish paid ten sterling pounds beside.

D

IV. Her

IV.

Her brother first observed the rector's eye
 Peruse the features of th' unguarded maid,
 He saw her bosom heave th' unconscious sigh,
 And her pale cheek in transient bloom arrayed :
 Their growing love he wished not to control :
 Where may she find a more deserving mate ?
 Though mean his fortune, nobler was his soul
 Than oft is found, I guesf, among th' imperious great.

V.

At length young EDWARD pressed his EMMA's hand,
 And poured these accents in her gentle ear ;
 " I go, once more, to join th' associate band,
 " I go and leave a friendless orphan here.
 " Sweet sister ! all that fate has left me now !
 " 'Midst these lone wilds shall timid beauty stray ?
 " Say, canst thou dwell beneath this mountain's brow,
 " No fire to guard thy youth, thy brother far away ?

VI. " How

VI.

“ How wilt thou pass thy solitary days ?
“ What kindness shall supply fraternal love ?—
“ That sudden blush, dear maid, thy heart betrays,
“ I see thy passion, and thy choice approve.
“ Yes—virtuous HENRY shall thy hand obtain,
“ (Thy hand, a brighter prize than courts afford)
“ Shall guard from every ill and every pain,
“ Each tender name unite—thy father, brother, lord.”

VII.

He joins their hands, their rustick feast partakes,
Then mounts his steed, and kindly bids adieu.
“ This poor retreat,” he cries, “ these dimpled lakes,
“ And graffy meadows, I resign to you.
“ Take them, my brother, ’tis thy EMMA’s dower,
“ A tribute which her merits claim from me,
“ An ample revenue yon classic bower
“ Gives to my little wants—the rest is due to thee.”

VIII.

Our EDWARD now the seats of learning sought,
Where on swift wing the studious moments fly ;
Yet, when his mind his father's image caught,
The tear of recollection filled his eye.

Three circling years elapsed, when weary grown
Of college talk, and groves and cloisters dim,
He longs to see, what books had only shewn,
The works and ways of men—strange ways, unknown to him!

IX.

But first to CAMBRIA's hills he speeds his flight,—
Soon in his arms he folds the beauteous dame ;
Her HENRY too.—He hears with new delight
An infant EDWARD lisp his uncle's name.

Day follows day, the rapid months succeed,
Yet still, by magick held, he lingers here.
At length he breaks away.—Slow moves his steed—
She waves her lessening hand, and drops a parting tear.

X. Amidst

X.

Amidst the proud metropolis behold
The modest student lost in wild amaze,
On stately domes, and chariots bright with gold,
And powdered slaves, at first he wont to gaze.
What restless multitudes in every street !
Yet none before had ever met his view ;
Oft he expects some college friend to greet,
But every face was strange, and every object new.

XI.

Uncertain, and perplexed he roams along,
Then of the crowd he seeks the doubtful way,
Quick from the heedless youth, the thievish throng
The little oracle of time convey.
But ah ! his tender breast with pity bleeds
When forth in troops the wretched females go,
With aching hearts, though clad in gaudy weeds,
To want and shame exposed, and drunkennes and wo !

XII. Just

XII.

Just ere his tutor dies, the good man's care
Wins for his favourite charge a curate's place ;
With gown and cassock new, and powdered hair,
Behold him now a city pulpit grace !
Mild were his looks, persuasive was his tone,
His thoughts benevolent, his language strong,
The audience, on a sudden wakeful grown,
Hang on their preacher's lips, nor think his sermon long.

XIII.

Yet some there were—alas ! mistaken men !
Who deemed their pastor's doctrine scarcely sound ;
For thundering threats ne'er dignified his pen,
Nor did his falling arm the cushion wound.
They joyed to hear the rough voice roaring loud,
The foaming tongue and flaming eye admired ;
Perdition dealt among the groaning crowd,
And all th' enthusiast rant, their senseless ears required.

XIV. His

XIV.

His maxim, "Charity is all in all," . . .
They almost thought it heresy to hear ;
Their weak, unmeaning cant of GRACE and CALL,
Would oft at parish-meetings vex his ear.
But still the better sort, from folly free,
Watched every word, and every word approved ;
They saw his doctrine with his life agree,
The precept they revered, the fair example loved.

XV.

Meanwhile, at idle hours, with ardent gaze,
His eye the page of chivalry devours,
Oft o'er wild heaths with armed knight he strays,
Or talks with beauteous dames in myrtle bowers.
But more on MILTON's bold, majestick strains,
And POPE's harmonious verse he loves to dwell,
Ne yet DAN SPENSER's fairy song disdains,
Though quaint the phrase, I ween, it pleased him passing
well.

XVI.

Sometimes, allured by SHAKSPEARE's mighty muse,
 SHAKSPEARE, the joy and pride of every age !
 The mimic splendour of the stage he views,
 Where, every sense, the magick scenes engage.
 See ! midnight ghosts the regal tent infest !
 See ! LEAR, old LEAR, expelled his children's door!—
 Grief, pity, terror, harrow up the breast—
 For GARRICK then inspired—but GARRICK is no more !

XVII.

And musick too (for ah ! his gentle soul
 Was all unmeet for “ stratagems and spoils ”)
 Musick he loved, and felt that sweet control
 Which sorrow dissipates, and pain beguiles :
 Those speaking chords, which Heaven-taught HANDEL
 strung,
 His ear enchant, his kindling mind inspire :
 In mute delight on ACIS' notes he hung,
 MESSIAH's lofty strains wrapt all his soul in fire.

XVIII. Once,

XVIII.

Once, by the sons of song and fashion led,
He seeks the dome in modern times renowned,
On English boards where foreign heroes tread,
And vulgar ears with foreign accents wound :
From Grecian lips he hears the liquid note,
Old NESTOR pours the modulated strain,
PELIDES rages through an eunuch's throat—
These wonders once he heard—nor sought to hear again.

XIX.

The buzz of crowds, the great man's false careſs,
The rude intrusion of the pert and vain,
And all the gay impertinence of drefs,
Oppreſſed and wearied quite our college-swain.
To him, unpolished elf! more noble seemed
The rough, blunt hind, than Fashion's fawning crew ;
And artleſs village maid more fair he deemed,
Than dame of high degree, perfumed and painted too.

XX.

The youth a young collegiate chanced to meet,
Who held by SEVERN's fide his little cure ;
He boasts the beauties of his calm retreat,
His woodbine walks, smooth hills, and rivers pure.
Both sigh for change, and both are soon agreed ;
The village priest in wealthy town remains ;
And see, unfashionable EDWARD speed,
From noise and gaping crowds, to solitary plains.

XXI.

How sweet the breeze, how fresh the vallies felt,
The hills how noble, and the skies how bright,
To him, who long in narrow lane had dwelt,
Where walls of dirty brick exclude the light !
On every side our trav'ller casts his view,
And as he distant leaves the bustling throng,
More playful-wild his rising spirits grew,
And, all-unconscious, oft break out in merry song.

XXII. Low

XXII.

Low in a vale the warm, dry mansion stood,
A glassy lake its front reflected shows ;
The east was skirted by a neighbouring wood,
While on the north a pine-clad hill arose.
The little garden, sloping to the sun,
Bears many a flowery shrub, and fruit tree gay,
And winding walks through groves of laurel run,
To chear the weary eye on dull, brown winter day.

XXIII.

Delighted with the spot, young EDWARD roves
O'er the smooth mead, and through the tangled dell,
Explores the center of the thickest groves,
And soon each half-trod path he knows full well.
And now his steps purfue the little rill
That feeds his lake, the spacious vale across,
When lo ! the stream comes foaming down the hill,
O'er black, opposing rock, and fragments brown with moss.

XXIV.

Oft would he tread the shades absorbed in thought,
 Or woo, in glen obscure, the favouring muse ;
 Whene'er his mind the glowing image caught,
 His feet would still the beaten path-way lose.
 The sounding lay he now repeats aloud,
 Now on the bank in pensive silence fits ;
 The wondering peasant, all-unheeded, bow'd—
 "Our curate sure," quoth he, "poor man ! hath lost his wits."

XXV.

Yet not again, unknowing and unknown,
 In constant solitude did EDWARD range ;
 With men and manners more familiar grown,
 He loved society, and wished for change.
 Sometimes with wealthy farmer would he talk
 Of grain, and furrowed field, and pasture wide ;
 And now and then with brother curate walk
 To where the neighbouring town their little wants supplied.

XXVI. His

XXVI.

His social days and social nights he shared
With vicar learn'd, or portly yeoman near ;
But chief the squire (whose fathers had prepared
For many a grave divine the weekly cheer)
Gives courteous welcome to his curate young,
And oft invites to hear the vocal lay,
Or mellow harp by blooming beauty strung,
Till EDWARD's melting soul in pleasure dies away.

XXVII.

Right proud and wealthy was this rural lord,
Stern was his brow, commanding was his eye,
Profuse his table, for the groaning board
Could half the village train with food supply.
Harsh was his temper, yet he knew full well,
That outward polish courts and camps bestow ;
His fixed resentments nothing could dispel,
A steady friend he was, but unforgiving foe.

XXVIII. The

XXVIII.

The son, a rude, uncultivated boor,
Of form ungraceful, and of sordid soul,
No pleasure knew, but when, on reedy moor
He sprung the game, or drained th' intemperate bowl.
But CAROLINE is all her father's care,
O ! worthy she of care, and love, and praise !
Her heart is gentle, and her face so fair
That senseless clods look up, and wonder while they gaze.

XXIX.

But though no foil a lovelier flower disclose,
Nor courts exhibit more attractive grace,
Yet CAROLINE superior beauty knows,
Her mind is still more faultless than her face.
Celestial mind ! cast in celestial mould !
Such vigorous sense, by elegance refined,
Such dove-like meekness, with such virtue bold,
But rarely meet, I fear, in man or woman kind.

XXX. Oft

XXX.

Oft does young EDWARD's ear drink in the lay,
The heavenly lay this breathing cherub sings ;
Her bower he haunts the livelong summer day,
While, with her harp, the listening valley rings.
And oft on winter evening will he sit
In converse sweet beside the social fire,
Partake the banquet rare of genuine wit,
While gentleness and joy her honied lips inspire.

XXXI.

Thus, with destructive voice, the Syrens sung—
But ah ! this guileless lady means not so !—
Yet hear no more, fond youth ! th' enchanting tongue,
To thee it threatens bitterness and wo !—
But say, couldst thou, fevere declaimer ! say
Couldst thou the dear, though fatal pleasure fly ?
From melody celestial turn away,
And close, to bloom divine, thy philosophick eye ?

XXXII.

The maid, all innocent, his converse sought,
And what her ear received her mind retained ;
The lore of science from his lips she caught,
Till on her heart Love's sweet infection gained.
Oft from her bosom stole th' unbidden sigh,
Her cheek grew warm when EDWARD met her view,
And now at village church, she knew not why,
Though still attentive there, she more attentive grew.

XXXIII.

Thus unperceived both fed the young desire,
Till the strong passion laughed at all control ;
In her, though bright, yet gentle was the fire,
But EDWARD's mightier flame consumed his soul.
O thou ! who wealth or fame hast made thy choice,
Watch the first, faint attack of mining love,
That moment fly, when once the melting voice
Or radiant eye begins thy changing pulse to move.

XXXIV. Why

XXXIV.

Why should I tell, what many a tale can show ?—
The weak resolve, forgot as soon as made,
The thrilling transport, and the burning wo,
Which now by turns their days and nights invade,
Why should I tell ? for who has never loved ?—
Each vowed from each to hide the stifled flame ;
But soon, alas ! by sudden impulse moved,
What long their eyes had shewn, their mutual lips proclaim.

END OF THE SECOND CANTO.

F CANTO

C A N T O III.

I.

WHERE the wide park its circling pale extends,
W Far from the mansion's venerable wall,
A dark, rough hill with sudden swell ascends,
O'er-hung with spreading fir, and beeches tall.
Its southern side a richer gloom supplies,
Grove meeting grove, and shade imbrowning shade ;
Where hid from garish day a cavern lies,
Which from the hollow mount the hand of art had made.

II. On

II.

On the smooth floor, bedecked with pebbly stone
Of many a hue, a little altar stands,
Here clothed with moss, with ivy there o'er-grown ;
Above, a sculptured saint extends its hands.
An inner room the matted couch reveals,
The rude walls many a holy cross display ;
While through the dim, arch'd window, faintly steals,
Once stained with forms uncouth, the many-coloured rays.

III.

Here, as tradition tells, in days of yore,
When moody Superstition dropped her beads,
(O ! happy land where now she rules no more !)
A wanderer came, arrayed in pilgrim weeds :
With travel spent, delighted with the gloom,
For gloom congenial wrapt his cloudy mind,
He shaped this rugged cave, his living tomb,
To social pleasure lost, and useless to mankind !

IV.

When burning noon-day glares upon the lawn,
Amidst the shelter of these lonely groves,
From every eye, from every ear withdrawn,
The lovely CAROLINE with EDWARD roves.
Oft would they stop to hear the ring-dove's moan,
Sweet sound ! to lover's ears a strain divine !
Or mark the torrent, from the rude cliff thrown,
Winding its frothy way through woods of darksome pine.

V.

One fatal eve, what time the night's pale queen
Sheds from her rising orb a feeble ray,
Won by the stillness of the sylvan scene,
But more by love seduced, too long they stray :
The mossy cell their weary step invites,
The rushy couch a homely seat supplies.
O ! see the day deserts yon western heights !
Ah ! inconfiderate pair!—but when were lovers wise ?

VI. Meanwhile

VI.

Meanwhile her fire an annual feast partakes,
Where smoke the pastry rich, and haunch divine !
But now the roaring table he forsakes,
Oppressed with noise, and politicks, and wine.
For soon returned, from room to room he hies,
Then seeks his daughter of the menial train ;
Swift at the word each ready vassal flies,
Through walks and arbours green—but all their search is
vain.

VII.

Now first his mind the dark suspicion caught,
Sudden he stalks along from shade to shade;
At length some demon to the covert brought,
Which hid the virtuous youth and gentle maid.
Here, hand in hand, insensible of time,
They fate—her soft notes floating through the grove :
The fire, scarce breathing, marks the warbled rhyme—
He hears young EDWARD's voice—he hears the voice of love.

VIII. “Base,

VIII.

“ Base, worthless girl !” the cavern’s hollow side
 Reverberates the sound—aghast they start—
 “ Glows in thy breast no spark of generous pride ?
 “ Is shame, is honour banished from thy heart ?—
 “ —And thou, deceiver ! mercenary slave !
 “ Practised in guile, and skilful to ensnare !
 “ Not those false charms allure—my wealth you crave ;
 “ But know, a father’s hate is all the wretch shall share.”

IX.

“ No dark deceiver I,” the youth rejoined,
 “ Pure is my love, and mutual is the flame ;
 “ Thy wealth attracts not me—know, EDWARD’s mind
 “ (Whate’er his state) disdains the sordid aim.”—
 “ —Parley with thee, seducer, I detest”—
 “ This hireling priest may plead ambition’s fire ;
 “ But O thou grovelling girl ! thy harlot breast
 “ No passion could inflame, but lawless, low desire !”

X. “ Ah !

X.

“ Ah ! when,” with faltering voice replies the maid,
“ When have I merited a wanton’s name ?
“ Can virtuous love the noblest rank degrade,
“ Or tinge the modest cheek with guilty shame ?
“ Have not thy lips on EDWARD’s merit dwelt,
“ His generous heart, and cultivated mind ?
“ Then must the daughter blush, whose soul has felt
“ The power of native worth by wisdom’s gifts refined ?”

XI.

“ Darest thou avow”—exclaims the furious fire—
“ But hear, degenerate wretch ! and trembling hear !—
“ Resolve no more to feed th’ ignoble fire,
“ Or for a father’s curse prepare thine ear.—
“ For ever from this needy priest to part,
“ This moment swear—or by th’ Eternal Power !
“ You here resign my house, my wealth, my heart—
“ And now be his or mine from this decisive hour.”

XII.

“ O cast me not away! Behold thy child,
 “ Thus prostrate in the dust, embrace thy knees!
 “ Whose fond endearments once thy pains beguiled,
 “ Whose every word, whose every look could please.
 “ Still, still, to watch thy age with filial care,
 “ The sweet, the darling privilege allow—
 “ Ah! let me still thy joys, thy sorrows share,
 “ And live for thee alone.—But spare that cruel vow!”

XIII.

“ O serpent! dost thou hope to blind again
 “ The doting fool deceived too long by thee?—
 “ No, to the proof—thy arts, thy prayers are vain—
 “ Renounce thy low-born paramour, or me!—
 “ Ha! dost thou pause?—Then take a father’s hate—
 “ From this cursed day I spurn thee from my door—
 “ Off!—cling not to me thus—’tis now too late,—
 “ Thy penitence were vain—I know thy face no more.”—

XIV. “ Then

XIV.

“ Then, EDWARD, hear a poor, deserted maid,—
“ When this stern man a father’s name confessed,
“ My fond, fond soul a prompt obedience paid ;
“ But now no love paternal warms his breast !
“ Then take my hand—(my heart’s already thine)
“ GOD, Nature, and my Country made it free ;—
“ The pride of wealth I chearfully resign,
“ And welcome scorn, reproach, and poverty with thee.”

XV.

Have you not seen the midnight flames arise,
Burst the strong walls and to the skies aspire ?
So raged the father—from his starting eyes
Ungoverned fury darts her keenest fire.
“ RECORDING GOD ! my bitterest curse enroll !
“ May thy red lightnings singe my aged head !
“ May pains eternal fasten on my soul,
“ Whene’er this pitying hand supplies their daily bread !”

XVI.

He said, and foaming hastens from the grove—
 When thus the youth—“ Look up, my CAROLINE !
 “ You lose, sweet maid, a father’s selfish love,
 “ But EDWARD and his little all are thine.
 “ What though the sumptuous board you grace no more,
 “ Quit the gay chariot and illumined hall,
 “ To share a needy curate’s scanty store,
 “ Yet love and peace are ours, and these are all in all.”

XVII.

Fond youth !—has love such all-supplying power ?
 Alas ! when Competence her gifts denies,
 When Poverty creeps on with aspect sour,
 Love gnaws the heart, and Peace affrighted flies.
 Sweet Love ! I hail thee, balm of human wo,
 Parent of young delight, best gift of Heaven !
 But rather let me ne’er thy transports know,
 Than see a darling bride to want and sorrow driven.

XVIII.

Swift for a while the joyous moments flew,
No disappointments sting, no discords wound ;
Each day more fond th' enamoured husband grew,
Each hour new graces in her lord she found.
Fly back, ye hours ! ye happy days, return !
At least, O Time ! thy rapid wing restrain !
For why so soon should worth and beauty mourn ?
But cease, unthinking bard, for man is born to pain.

XIX.

Scarce on their growing loves twelve moons had smiled,
When sleep eternal seals her father's eyes ;
With his last breath the wretch disowns his child,
And all his wealth the son's excess supplies.
Yet CAROLINE, abandoned and denied,
With many a filial tear bedews his tomb,
While the base heir throws all his portals wide,
And bids th' intemperate roar loud echo through the dome.

XX.

Soon EDWARD's scanty means grew scantier still,
 His cure supplies but food and coarse array ;
 No more the college rents his coffers fill,
 And all his little hoard melts fast away.
 Two blooming infants graced the nuptial bed,
 The mother's transport, and the father's pride ;
 Yet oft he clasped the babes, and sighing said,
 " How shall your wretched sire for all your wants provide ! "

XXI.

O miserable man ! from day to day
 What pangs thy flow-consuming heart must know,
 To see that tender frame the patient prey
 Of servile toil, and penury, and wo !
 She, who so late beheld a numerous band,
 Each wish preventing with officious care,
 A household drudge become ! with flaxish hand
 The nightly bed to dress, the daily meal prepare !

XXII. " Why

XXII.

“ Why droops my EDWARD ?” thus she oft would cry,
“ These hands can labour, and delight in toil ;
“ No task is irksome when my lord is by,
“ No grief depresses if my EDWARD smile.”—
—“ O my lost CAROLINE ! my ruined wife !
“ By me, accursed wretch ! to misery driven !
“ How can I see thee drag this abject life,
“ Smile midst the horrid scene, yet hope to be forgiven ?”

XXIII.

“ Not so, my love,” she cried, “ my choice was free,
“ Nor would I now for worlds that choice forego,
“ ’Tis peace, ’tis happiness to dwell with thee,
“ Midst every evil that the wretched know.”
Thus would she strive—but ah ! she strove in vain,
To heal the wound that festered in his soul ;
His love, his fortitude could scarce restrain
The still returning sigh, the bitter tear control.

XXIV. Meantime

XXIV.

Meantime her little strength the fair forsook,
 Yet still her mind its wonted vigour knew ;
 Faint was her voice, and meager was her look,
 While her flushed cheek retained a crimson hue.
 Now EDWARD's pen (his shame, his pride subdued)
 Too late implored his EMMA's generous aid ;
 Too late—for ah ! each day, each hour he viewed
 The hec tick fire steal on, and every pulse invade.

XXV.

That mighty grief which bursts the swelling heart,
 Fatal, though slow, upon his spirit preys ;
 He hangs despairing o'er his dearer part—
 When EMMA comes expiring hope to raise.
 “ Take back,” she said, “ what once you nobly gave,
 “ Our fruitful glebe will all our wants supply.”
 “ Ah me !” he faintly cried, “ no wealth can save—
 “ The rapid plague devours—my CAROLINE must die.”

XXVI. “ No

XXVI.

" No, EDWARD, no—if aught has power to heal,
" If tenderness can sooth, and art restore,
" Soon shall thy bride returning vigour feel,
" And all this weight of anguish be no more.
" By day, by night, the languid couch I'll guard,
" Watch every look, alleviate every pain,
" And pitying Heaven shall all our cares reward."—
Alas ! the doom is sealed, and human aid is vain !

XXVII.

How shall the Muse the tragick scene recite ?
Let fancy paint what words can never speak.—
See EDWARD now a withered, shapeless sprite,
Crawl to his love, and bathe her dying cheek !—
Hear her last, faltering breath her husband bless !
See the last pang distorting all her charms !
O ! see her, gasping, feebly strive to press
Her little helpless babes, and die in EDWARD's arms !

XXVIII. Disease.

XXVIII.

Disease sweep on!—the lingering wretch release!—
 At length he feels the last, the friendly blow;
 He lies extended on the bed of peace,
 For death is peace to virtue and to wo:
 When EMMA seeks his couch, and smiling cries,
 “No more in poverty shall EDWARD pine,
 “Cold as his fire thy churlish brother lies,
 “The victim of debauch, and all his wealth is thine.”

XXIX.

“Alas,” he cried, “my treasure is in Heaven!—
 “Ah! what is wealth to him who gasps for breath?
 “My soul now purged from all its earthly leaven,
 “Looks back with scorn, and springs to welcome death!
 “Yet, POWER SUPREME, I bless thy righteous will,
 “That frees my children from the pangs of want!—
 —“O EMMA! guard them—keep from every ill,—
 “And in their infant minds the seeds of virtue plant.”

XXX. The

XXX.

The scene is closed.—And thou, who fain wouldst ken
The ways of Heaven, the sacred volume see,
“ *Gold in the fire is tried, accepted men*
In the sharp furnace of adversity.”
At EDWARD’s fate shall mortal man repine?
Lift up the eye of faith! behold on high
The happy pair midst choirs of angels shine,
Blest with unchanging love, and never more to die.

THE END.

ERRATUM.

Page 37, line 5—For *For soon*, read *Too soon*.

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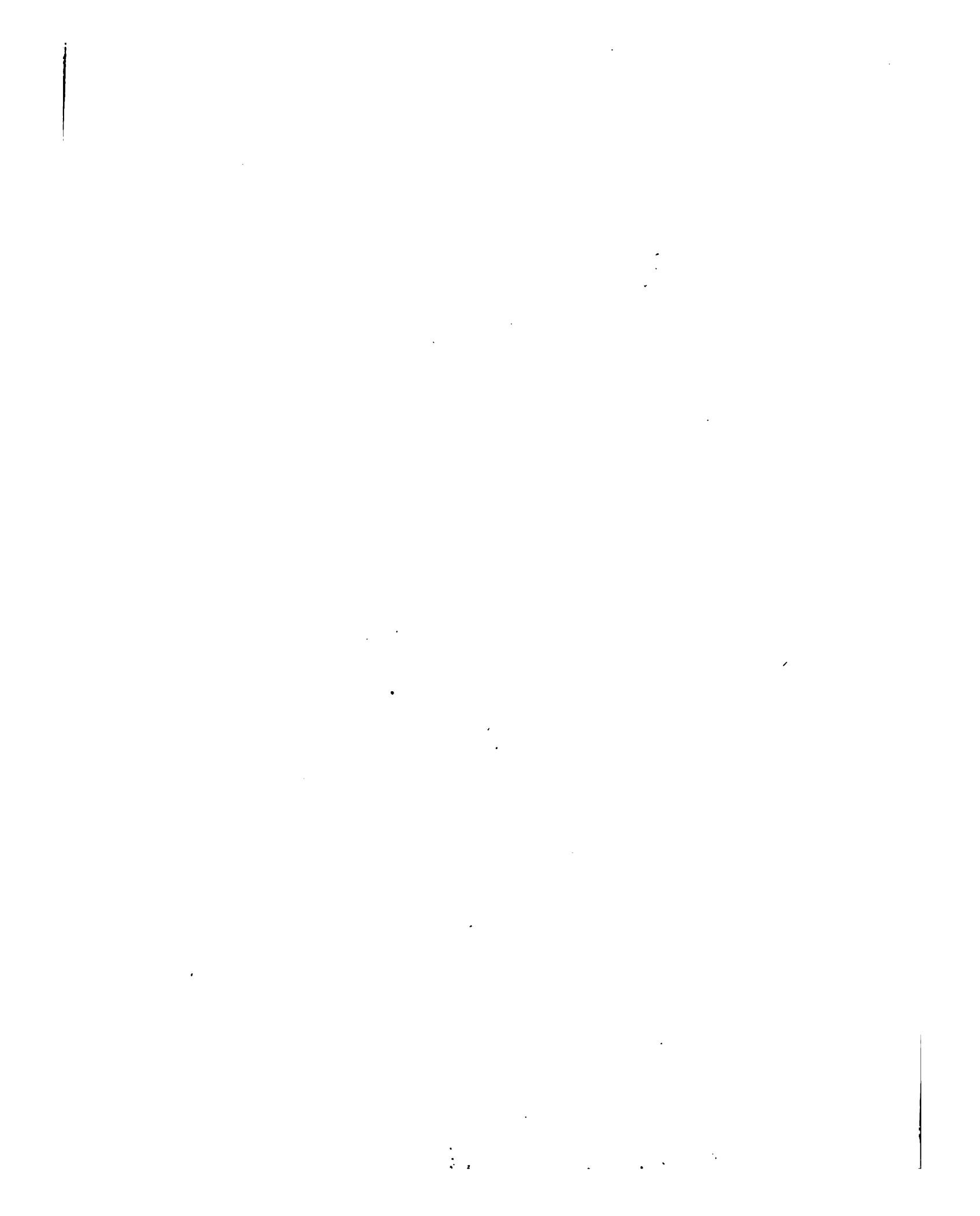
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